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NOTICE OF THE LATE DR. PICKERING.**BY W. S. W. RUSCHENBERGER, M.D.**

It is a custom of this Society to announce the death of every member or correspondent when it occurs, without accompanying the announcement with a notice of his career. From this custom may be excepted those members who have been conspicuous by their success in the cultivation of natural science, or who have won the general approbation of the Academy by generous contribution towards the advancement of science, or who have largely aided the progress of the Society by their labors.

For such reasons it seems appropriate that the archives of the Society should contain a record to show why his contemporary and fellow-members entertained sentiments of sincere respect and cordial esteem for the late Dr. Charles Pickering.

The records show that Charles Pickering, M.D., of Salem, Mass., was elected a correspondent of this Society Nov. 28, 1826. He had then just entered the twenty-second year of his age. Early in the following year (1827), he became a resident of Philadelphia, and, therefore, a member. From that date until 1838 he was rarely absent from any meeting of the Academy.

At that time the details of the affairs of the Society were conducted chiefly by standing committees. Dr. Pickering served on the Zoological Committee from December 25, 1827, until January, 1838, ten years; on the Botanical Committee from Dec. 28, 1828 (of which he was the chairman from Jan. 1833), until Jan. 1837, eight years; on the Publication Committee from Dec. 1829 until Dec. 1843, four years; and on the Library Committee from Jan. 1837 until Jan. 1838, one year.

He was Librarian from Dec. 1828 until Dec. 1833, five years; and a Curator from Dec. 1833 until Dec. 1837, four years.

The record tells us that he discharged faithfully and efficiently the duties of all the positions to which he was appointed.

To Dr. Pickering was intrusted the transfer to the Academy of the great collection of plants bequeathed by the Rev. Lewis David Von Schweinitz, who died in 1834. He prepared a catalogue of American plants in the collection of the Academy, and presented it at the stated meeting held May 13, 1834. Those plants which

were previously in the collection, many of them Mr. Nuttall's types, he intercalated in the Schweinitz herbarium, attaching an appropriate label to each. On the 24th of March, 1835, on motion of Prof. H. D. Rogers it was unanimously resolved, "That the thanks of the Society be awarded to Dr. Charles Pickering for the highly successful manner in which he has executed the very arduous task of collating and arranging the extensive herbarium of the Academy."

The work done by Dr. Pickering has contributed much to facilitate the labors of his successors in the botanical department of the Academy.

On the 26th of Jan. 1836, on motion of Dr. Samuel George Morton it was unanimously resolved, "That the grateful thanks of the Institution be tendered to Dr. Pickering for his voluntary journey to New Harmony, the faithful execution of the trust reposed in him of selecting from the library of Mr. Maclure such works as were designed for the Academy, and for the prompt and successful arrangements made by him for the transportation of said books to this city."

The mission just referred to occupied Dr. Pickering about three months, and brought to the Academy's library an addition of about 2300 volumes of valuable scientific works.

The services of Dr. Pickering to the Academy were important in every sense, and are worthy of grateful remembrance.

While laboring for the Academy, he qualified himself perfectly to discharge efficiently those duties which devolved upon him in 1838, when he became a member of the United States Exploring Expedition. The means and facilities requisite for the instruction and training of students of natural science were at that period nowhere in the country more ample than in the Academy; and it is believed that at this time they are not better in any other institution in the United States.

On the 19th of October, 1827, Dr. Pickering read, at a meeting of the American Philosophical Society, a paper "On the Geographical Distribution of Plants," which was published in the third volume of the Transactions in 1830. He was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society Jan. 15, 1828, and resigned in Nov. 1837.

He was elected Recording Secretary of the Pennsylvania Hor-

ticultural Society Feb. 1830, and served till Sept. 1837, when he resigned.

In conjunction with James H. Dana, Dr. Pickering read, Feb. 20, 1838, before the Yale Natural History Society, of which he was a member, a "Description of a Crustaceous Animal belonging to the genus *Caligus*, *C. Americanus*," which occupies forty pages of vol. xxxviii. of Silliman's Journal.

Dr. Pickering was appointed a member of the scientific corps attached to the United States Exploring Expedition, under command of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes. He was placed on board of the flag-ship *Vincennes*. The expedition sailed from Hampton Roads August 19, 1838, and arrived off Sandy Hook, N. Y., June 10, 1842, after an absence of nearly four years. He is recorded among those present at the stated meeting of the Academy, July 5th, and frequently afterwards until he again went abroad. The first record of his presence after his return is May 20, 1845, and from that date he occasionally attended meetings every year. He was last present November 7, 1876.

October 11, 1843, Dr. Pickering left Boston and visited Egypt, Arabia, India, and the eastern part of Africa, for the sake of extending and verifying observations made while attached to the United States Exploring Expedition. Upon his return he settled in Boston, and prepared his "Races of Man and their Geographical Distribution," quarto, pp. 447, published by Charles C. Little and James Brown, Boston, 1848, being vol. ix. of the Exploring Expedition.

In 1850 he contributed a paper, "Enumeration of the Races of Man," to the Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal, vol. xlviii.

His work, entitled "The Geographical Distribution of Animals and Plants," quarto, pp. 212, being vol. xv. of the Exploring Expedition, was published by Little & Brown, Boston, 1854.

In the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences are recorded his observations on the Egyptian computation of Time, Oct. 1849; on the Egyptian Astronomical Cycle, May, 1850; on Sulphur Vapor, Dec. 9, 1856; on the Coptic Alphabet, March 8, 1859; on the Geographical Distribution of Species, March 22, 1859, and Dec. 11, 1860; and on the Jewish Calendar, Oct. 11, 1864. At the request of the Secretary of the Institution he prepared a paper "On the Gliddon Mummy Case in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution," in June,

1867, which is published in vol. xvi. of the Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge.

The "Geographical Distribution of Animals and Plants. Part II. Plants in their Wild State," quarto, was published by the Naturalists' Agency, Salem, 1876. It is preceded by a note, "The following 524 pages comprise about one-half of a prepared volume, the printing of which was suspended in 1860.—Charles Pickering."

The great work of Dr. Pickering's life, The Chronological History of Plants, to which he had devoted sixteen years of laborious research, was only recently completed, and is now passing through the press.

This imperfect summary of work completed is sufficient evidence of his unremitting industry, and suggests that he fully utilized his opportunities to qualify himself for research during the ten years he zealously wrought in the offices and on the committees of the Academy. He was certainly a distinguished alumnus of the Institution.

Dr. Pickering was characterized by imperturbable firmness of purpose, and by his loyalty to truth, and integrity in every sense. He was extremely modest, averse to parade, and remarkably free from pretension of every kind. His acquirements were extensive, varied, and minutely accurate. His friends loved him for his unaggressive, always tranquil temper, and his obliging disposition.

To this imperfect outline of Dr. Pickering's scientific career, though a thing apart, may be added a few words on his heredity.

Colonel Timothy Pickering, his grandfather, was native of Salem, Mass., but his active participation in the Revolution brought him to Philadelphia. He served in the army, took part in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and was present at the surrender of Yorktown. He was appointed Postmaster-General, August, 1792; Secretary of War, Jan. 1795; and Secretary of State, Dec. 1795, from which office he was removed May 12, 1800, by President John Adams. His son, Timothy Pickering, Jr., the father of Dr. Pickering, was born in this city, Oct. 1, 1779. He graduated at Harvard College; was appointed a midshipman in the navy Jan. 17, 1799, served creditably one cruise under command of the famous Stephen Decatur, and resigned May 2, 1801.

His father, Colonel Pickering, had acquired extensive tracts of "wild lands" in western Pennsylvania. Finding himself in re-

stricted circumstances when removed from office by President John Adams, he determined to transfer his family to those lands with a view to their settlement. Timothy Pickering, Jr., joined his father, and settled at Starucca, now in Susquehanna County, Pa. There he married Lurena Cole, Dec. 29, 1804, and there Dr. Charles Pickering was born Nov. 10, 1805. His father died May 14, 1807, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. A few years prior to this date Colonel Pickering had changed his place of residence to a farm at Wenham, near Salem, and thither he took the widow and her son to remain members of his own household. There Dr. Pickering was raised and educated under the immediate direction of his mother, and the supervision of his distinguished grandfather. He was a member of the class of 1823 at Harvard, and graduated from the medical department of the same school in 1826.

Dr. Pickering married Sarah S., daughter of the late Daniel Hammond, Esq., in 1851. He died in Boston, March 17, 1878, leaving a widow but no child. His memory will be affectionately cherished by those who knew him, and his works will secure him respect from all who may follow the same paths of research.